

# Silver Lady

Our GMC Motorhome Story

Byron and Martha Songer

# How It Began

- Byron first drove a GMC Motorhome in 1976, really liked the ride, convenience and style.
- Byron saw one of the Coke Gad-a-bout coaches given away in 1977.
- Martha liked traveling and taking time to relax

# How It Developed

- We met via eHarmony in 2003
- Both expressed the idea of traveling and owning a motorhome
- We married in 2004
- A close friend died in 2007 and we decided “it was time” because we’re not guaranteed living to retirement

The Search Began

# The Internet Helps

- Martha did the searching and found several GMC's for sale
- Byron read the details and looked at the photos
- Byron built a spreadsheet listing prices, maintenance done, upgrades, etc. and then did analysis to determine the best value

# Looking

- We looked at two motorhomes
  - One in Indiana; it was painted black, had rough treatment on the interior, ran well.
  - Another in Tennessee; had been refurbished by Bethune in North Carolina, the couple was nice but didn't let us drive it.



# The Tennessee Coach

# A Royale in Charleston

- Martha found the ad for a 1978 Royale with 98K original miles, records, new paint in 2000, new tires, rear bath, generator serviced, awnings, etc.
- “Must see to appreciate”
- We decide to pursue it



First Glimpse

We Asked for More  
Photos





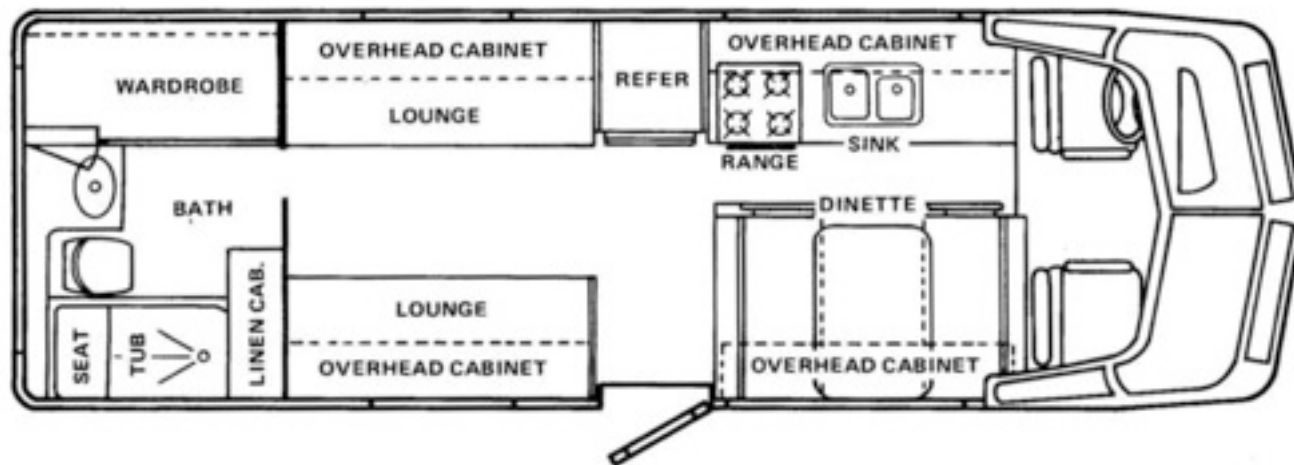


Driver seat, original upholstery, third-party steering wheel



Original interior, with headlining coming off

26' REAR BATH ROYALE w/TUB



Floorplan: Royale with rear bath

# Arrangements

- We came to an agreement on price
- We arranged to fly to Charleston and “bring her home” to Louisville
- Never touched or even driven the motorhome
- Was this the “right” thing to do

# The Trip Home

- Right headlight and parking light didn't work
- The engine fumes inside were obvious
- The ride was rough at 65 and above
- It didn't idle nicely
- What have we done?

- It was ours now

# The First Days

# Get It Running Right

- Major tune-up, new vacuum hoses
- Rebuilt carburetor
- Blown head gasket replaced
- New mufflers
- Steering wheel replaced, other work done on steering



Added red stripe for “character”, Ramco mirrors, wheels sanded and painted

# Other Maintenance

- Auto A/C nearly rebuilt
- Schrader valves installed on rear suspension
- Front end alignment and balancing

Now We Can Use Her

# First Trip - September 07

- Weekend in Southern Illinois
- Friday night at Walmart in Carmi
- Saturday night at Arrowhead Lake in Johnston City
- We had a good time and no problems



Candice and Martha getting ready  
for us to eat at a rest stop

# Shake Down - October 08

- Weekend in Calhoun, Georgia at the KOA
- Ashley, Michael and Jada came for overnight on Friday
- Everything working well
- Sleeping six is “a little tight”



# First Rally - October 08

- GMC Eastern States
- KOA near Opryland in Nashville
- Look at all the GMC motorhomes - some nearly original, some fixed nicely, all have become “unique”



# Then Came Other “Work”

- The ceiling needed replacement, new countertops, new upholstery, etc.
- Byron repainted the dash; no original brown and no more woodgrain applique



# Work at Southland



Ceiling removed



Fabric replacement

# Work at Southland



Faucet and sink in bath, driver and passenger seat with tilting backs



Cooktop, faucet, sink, countertop, wall covering, and day/night shades



# New Upholstery



The dinette - red MicroSuede and  
gingham checked cloth

Living/bed area - gray MicroSuede  
and striped bolsters



# Convertible Couch

Byron's idea of a jack-knife couch



Standard size of a double bed



Shower side

From the outside



Closet side

Valence and Blinds for Bath and  
Closet

# Additional Work

- New Sony radio with iPod/Aux connector
- Furnace repaired (faulty switch)
- TV removed and rear speaker put back in place
- New hot-water heater and holding tank
- New shocks and air bags (one was original)

# Other Travels

- Lewis & Marcia's 50th – Johnson City, Tennessee
- Cedars of Lebanon State Park, Tennessee
- Dixielanders at Bean Station, Tennessee
- Kincaid Lake State Park, Kentucky
- The Outer Banks, North Carolina (through Richmond, Athens and Nashville)
- Ivers Reunion – Fairfield, Illinois
- Local picnic times with friends

# Enhancements

- Henderson Electric Wipers
- Rostra Electronic Cruise Control
- Ramco Power Mirrors with Convex Mirrors
- Sony AM/FM CD with Aux In
- Sharp Carousel Microwave Convection
- Wedgewood Vision Stove by Atwood
- Fantastic Vent Fan (multi-speed)
- Hardeman Bogie Greasers

# Enhancements

- TachVac Gauge by Westach Instruments
- KYB Shock Absorbers from Applied GMC
- Halon Automatic Fire Extinguisher (engine)
- Alante RV Captains Chairs (w/ lumbar)
- Carrier Roof Air Conditioner
- Countertops, Sinks, Faucets and Toilet
- Carpeting and Upholstery
- CATV Connection
- Three-point Seat Belts
- Cabinet in Closet
- Headliner

# To Do and Wish

- Dash Lights and Labels
- Drop and Renew Fuel Tanks
- Stainless Steel Fuel Lines
- Light Fixtures
- Wood flooring
- Alloy Wheels, New Tires
- New Windshield Drape and Rail
- Repair Air Pump (Right Side)
- Refinish Bathtub

# We Highly Recommend



Joe Haddad, Haddad's Auto Service, keeps our coach going



Zeb Frady and sons of Southland in Buford, Georgia



The Happy Campers